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Summary record of the 667th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 11 January 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. Manalo

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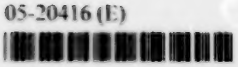

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Report of the Chairperson of the pre-session working group

1. **Ms. Popescu**, introducing the report of the pre-session working group (CEDAW/PSWG/2005/I/CRP.1 and 2 and addenda), said that it had met from 26 to 30 July 2004 to prepare lists of issues and questions relating to the periodic reports of Algeria, Croatia, Gabon, Italy, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Paraguay, Samoa and Turkey. In accordance with Committee decision 31/III, the working group for the first time had also prepared lists of issues and questions for States which would be presenting their initial reports at the thirty-second session.

2. The pre-session working group, in preparing the lists of issues and questions for periodic reports, had paid particular attention to the State party's follow-up to previous concluding comments and had taken into consideration its previous report. In accordance with Committee decisions 18/I, the working group had held a closed meeting with representatives of entities of the United Nations system and received written contributions from non-governmental organizations on three of the States parties whose reports were before it. The working group had also formulated lists of issues and questions, focusing on themes addressed by the Convention, pursuant to Committee decisions 22/IV, 25/II and 31/III.

Second periodic report of Algeria
(CEDAW/C/DZA/2,
CEDAW/PSWG/2005/I/CRP.1/Add.1 and CRP.2)

3. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Algeria took places at the Committee table.*

4. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria), introducing his country's second periodic report (CEDAW/C/DZA/2), said that, when the initial report had been presented in January 1999, Algeria had been plagued by terrorism, its institutions had been under threat, and its economy bled dry. In 2005, Algeria was no longer the same country as substantial changes, including the holding of elections with the participation of women, had taken place. Women had been in the frontlines in the fight for national survival as they had had the most to lose from the decade-long terror. By 2005, Algeria had been transformed: peace had been re-established and it was engaged in the construction of a modern society. The report testified to the substantive progress made even if gaps existed, shortcomings that his Government was determined to address.

5. He highlighted his country's global support for international human rights instruments, in particular those reinforcing women's rights. Algeria had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1996 and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women in 2004. It was also a party to such international conventions as the ILO Equal Remuneration Convention (1951), as well as the ILO Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation (1958). Activities in various spheres were being undertaken, pertaining in particular to legislative reform, including reform of the penal and civil codes, as well as their respective procedural codes, the status of the judiciary, prison reform and the social reintegration of prisoners.

6. Algeria's Constitution guaranteed the equality of its citizens before the law, and various codes also stressed such equality. Provisions had also been included in legislative texts and other regulations to promote the equality of all citizens. The law guaranteed women the right to work and to strike, to equal remuneration and to promotion. Those measures had led to the significant advancement of women in various spheres.

7. Steady progress had been made in the participation of women in decision-making and in access to higher government posts. For example, four women were currently serving in the Government, and there were two women ambassadors. One ministerial secretary-general and four ministerial cabinet heads were women. Women held important positions in the judiciary, including that of the President of the State Council; three court presidents, 34 tribunal presidents out of 56 and 115 examining magistrates out of 404 were women. Out of a total of 2,811 magistrates, 922 were women. The trend was similar in other spheres. In the Ministry of Justice, out of a total of 146 higher-level officials, 22 were women. A woman was Vice-Governor of the Bank of Algeria. The Faculties of the Sciences of Nature and the Humanities and the University of Sciences and Technology were headed by women.

8. The Algerian Government had also taken measures to ensure that women were represented in professions traditionally deemed a masculine preserve. Thus, Algerian women were represented to an ever greater extent in the Army and the police force. Currently numerous steps were being taken so victims of violence could be heard. In each prefecture, at least one woman had been appointed who could receive women and deal with such victims. The aim was to humanize the police stations and encourage women to report their problems. Female security agents were present at airports and ports, as well as in the courts, and the local police. To date, the national police had 7,280 women, of which 4,093 were policewomen and 3,187 other police agents. The Civil Defence Administration counted 101 women doctors out of a total staff of 651, which demonstrated the inclusion of women in a traditionally masculine sphere, such as that body's administrative and operational structures.

9. Regarding political activities, no legislative provisions existed which prohibited or limited women's participation in the political life of the country. The right of women to vote and to be elected was guaranteed by the Constitution and by regulation No. 97-07 of 6 March 1997. As of 8 April 2004, there were 18,094,555 voters, of which 8,349,770 were women, comprising 46.15 per cent of the electorate. The various elections held in 2002 had showed an increase in women's representation by 6.92 per cent in the National Assembly, 8.26 per cent in the Prefecture Popular Assemblies and 3.1 per cent in the Municipal Popular Assemblies. Those statistics pointed to the growing visibility of women on the political stage.

10. The number of women in the labour force had increased considerably even if their total numbers remained low. Numerous measures for creating employment were also benefiting women so that, for example, in 2001 the proportion of women in the workforce had increased by 1.28 per cent over 2000. Over 600,000 women worked in the informal sector, and 56 per cent of female workers were under 40 years of age. Government efforts to improve the economic and social position of rural women had improved their participation in agricultural production, which was traditionally a male-dominated sphere, and today they comprised 18 per cent of the agricultural workforce. Algerian women in the labour force were strongly represented in the areas of teaching, education, specialized health care, pharmacy and the legal system.

11. The issue of equality in the laws on nationality and the remarks made during the Committee's consideration of the initial report had been included by the Algerian Government in the framework of the revision of the relevant legal texts. The Code of Algerian Nationality was currently being revised to take into account the grievances expressed by Algerian civil society and to bring the relevant legislation into line with international conventions which Algeria had ratified. The general conditions for the acquisition and loss of Algerian nationality made no distinction between men and women. On the question of bringing national legislation into line with the provisions of article 9 of the Convention, a draft law that modified and complemented the Code of Algerian Nationality had been initiated by the Government. The draft law aimed to promote equality between men and women, protect children and take into account new situations in the development of social relations.

12. The fact that the Government placed special emphasis on providing universal free compulsory education was an important factor in the ongoing emancipation of Algerian women. Today, the growing proportion of girls in institutes, universities and faculties exceeded 50 per cent. They represented 57.53 per cent of secondary school pupils, and the percentage of girls in higher education which had stood at 39.5 per cent in 1990 had increased to 55.4 per cent in 2003. By focusing on education, Algeria opted for a gradual transformation of society and of sociocultural modes of behaviour. Every year women were moving away from their traditional roles, and stereotypes were disappearing. School textbooks had been completely revised in that regard. A measure of female emancipation in Algeria was that in January 1999, when the initial report had been presented, there had been no women ambassadors. The situation had changed in 2000 when President Bouteflika had appointed women ambassadors.

13. The participation of women in the labour market was an important measurement of social emancipation and a barometer of human rights. Algerian law enshrined the principle of equality of men and women with regard to social security and provided working women with health insurance, protection against work-related accidents and maternity and child benefits. The retirement age for women was 60 years, although women could also retire at 55. Women's participation in the workforce had increased from 8 per cent in 1989

to almost 15 per cent in 2001. At the end of 2003, they had represented 27 per cent of all civil service employees, and the proportion of women employed in the education and health sectors had increased to 47.8 per cent and 42 per cent respectively.

14. Now that the threat from a decade of terrorism has been overcome, the Government was focusing on healing the social fabric and, in particular, on the issue of violence against women. In that regard, the Government was providing material and financial assistance, and psychological and moral support to victims. Centres to help female victims of violence as well as orphanages had been opened, and specially trained staff were on hand there to provide assistance. While domestic violence had previously been a taboo subject, now it was widely discussed. Both the Government and civil society attached importance to that issue and had expanded initiatives and information and monitoring networks in that area. In addition, sexual harassment had been made a criminal offence under the revised Penal Code, providing women the legal means to pursue the perpetrators of such crimes. In that regard, he pointed out that his Government had decided to invite the Special Rapporteur on violence against women to visit Algeria.

15. Equal access to health care was an area where remarkable progress had been made in ensuring the rights of women. Health care was free, and even remote areas had facilities. The fact that women were well represented in this sector impacted positively and helped to break down barriers, especially in preventive health care. The follow-up and monitoring of the health of small and young girls were ensured through preventive medicine and the school health system. There were more than a thousand screening units in schools covering the entire school and university population. Moreover, sports were compulsory in schools. Family planning had also been introduced. The rate of population growth had been reduced by half to 1.53 per cent, and life expectancy had increased by 2 years to 73.9 years for men and 74.9 for women. Maternal and child mortality rates had fallen.

16. The Family Code determined the legal status of members of a family and reflected the level of the social, economic and cultural development of the society. Since its promulgation in 1984, the Code had not been modified, and the evolution of social norms together with the need to bring domestic legislation into line with the international instruments ratified by Algeria, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, now made its revision necessary. In 2004, the President of the Republic had therefore instructed the Government to take the necessary measures to bring national legislation into line with current international law for the protection of the rights of women, to initiate the process of ratifying instruments that had an impact on the legal status of women, and to review the need for the reservations which Algeria had entered upon ratifying the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

17. The Algerian Government had thereupon embarked on the revision of the Family Code and the Code of Algerian Nationality which would allow many of its reservations to the Convention to be removed. The commission that had been established for that purpose had noted that the Algerian family had evolved from a patriarchal structure headed by the husband to one that was based on family solidarity. It had proposed modifications that were consistent with the provisions of the Constitution, which provided for equality between citizens, and with Islamic law, which also provided for equality and was characterized by its capacity to adapt to changes in the society. The proposals were currently being debated in the society and in the media and would be brought before the National Assembly in the near future.

18. Algeria was committed to progress, modernity and the full enjoyment by women of their rights. Equal partnership between men and women was the ultimate goal and, to that end, bringing national laws into conformity with the provisions of the Convention and other human rights instruments was one of the Government's top priorities.

19. **The Chairperson** invited the experts to pose questions to the delegation clustered according to the four substantive parts of the Convention.

Articles 1 to 6

20. **Ms. Khan** noted the progress that had been made towards de jure equality between men and women but expressed concern at the lack of substantive progress towards de facto equality. She also failed to understand the rationale for some of Algeria's reservations to the Convention, including those relating to women's

freedom of movement within the country and to choose their residence and domicile.

21. **Ms. Gabr** asked whether the vanguard role played by Algerian women in the struggle for independence was reflected in current efforts to reinforce the role of women in society. She also wondered whether temporary special measures were being taken to protect women from domestic and other forms of violence pending the enactment of legislation in that field. It would also be useful to know whether Islamic law, or Shariah, which called for mutual respect between men and women, was being used to promote equality for women.

22. **Ms. Shin** observed that the main problem seemed to be the existence of discriminatory laws. She asked whether a time frame had been established for the revision of the Family Code. If the political will existed, then it should be completed in the near future. She also wondered whether the commission tasked with the revision of the current Code also planned to review other discriminatory laws that were obstacles to the effective implementation of the Convention, and whether new laws were being drafted to protect women, including laws to prevent and punish domestic violence.

23. **Ms. Schöpp-Schilling** challenged the assertion in the report of Algeria (CEDAW/C/DZA/2, p. 10) that the reservations entered by the Government did not question the essence of the Convention. The Committee's view was that article 2, on the obligations of States parties, was central to the object and purpose of the Convention. She wondered what obstacles prevented the country from completing the revision of the Family Code and the Code of Algerian Nationality in the near future. She was concerned at the gap between formal and substantive equality for women in Algeria and asked whether the Government envisaged temporary special measures to redress that situation.

24. **Ms. Zou** Xiaoqiao said that negative cultural stereotypes of women were still prevalent in Algerian society and wondered whether the Government had joined forces with non-governmental organizations in awareness-raising and educational campaigns aimed at combating those stereotypes.

25. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria), replying to the questions posed by the experts, emphasized that there were no discriminatory laws in Algeria. The Government had recognized the need to amend the Family and Nationality Codes to bring them into line with international norms and to take account of the evolution of Algerian society. He disagreed with the experts who had suggested that other laws also needed to be revised. On the subject of domestic violence, for example, nothing in the national laws encouraged or permitted men to beat their spouses. While there was no separate code that specifically addressed domestic violence, all such acts were punishable under the Penal Code. Domestic violence, which was found in all countries, developed and developing, was no longer the taboo subject that it had once been in Algeria, and women were being educated to speak out and to seek redress through the justice system.

26. The question of whether article 2 was central to the Convention could be debated at length. Despite the reservation that it had entered, however, Algeria made every effort to apply the provisions of article 2. The revision of the Family Code was a complex task, especially in a Muslim country, and it would not be easy to overcome the obstacles and psychological barriers that existed, especially given the resistance by some sectors of the society. The issue was currently being fiercely debated by the press and society. The draft code had already been approved by the Government Council and was currently awaiting review by the Council of Ministers, after which it would be forwarded to the National Assembly for adoption. While the Committee's concern that the process should be expedited was understandable, it was difficult to say precisely when the formalities would be completed, but he hoped that it would be soon.

27. **Ms. Boumghar** (Algeria) said that the comprehensive programme to reform and modernize the school curriculum, which had been launched in 1999, had succeeded in expunging from textbooks lessons of violence, intolerance and discrimination and replacing them with messages of tolerance. A commission had been established to certify textbooks before their release to schools and a number of texts had been rejected on the grounds of discriminatory content.

28. **Ms. Benabdallah** (Algeria) said that, despite the reservation that it had entered to article 15.4 of the Convention, as Algerian society evolved, women, particularly those in such professions as the magistracy, the police and the military, were increasingly exercising the freedom to choose their residence and domicile. In response to the question as

to whether the commission tasked with the revision of the Family Code would also undertake the revision of other laws, she said that that commission was concerned exclusively with the Family Code and that other commissions were reviewing other codes, including the Civil Code, the Commercial Code and the Penal Code. The commission reviewing the Penal Code was considering the inclusion of specific provisions on the prevention and punishment of domestic violence. The crime of assault and battery was already covered in the Penal Code.

29. On the question of temporary special measures, the Government's willingness to adopt that approach could be seen in its establishment of special centres for victims of domestic violence, which were often staffed by women, and the launching of public awareness and educational programmes. The President of the Republic himself had given impetus to the campaign for the advancement of women and an end to discrimination against them. She hoped that Algeria would be able to state in its next report that it had removed its reservations to the Convention.

30. **Ms. Alouani** (Algeria) said that the number of women employed in the national security services had increased significantly since 1995 and today exceeded 4,000, spread across various services including public security, information services, prefectures and the police. One reason for the increase was that security service staff regulations made no distinction between men and women, offering attractive salaries and equal recruitment to both.

31. **Ms. Bouaoun** (Algeria) said that Algeria had no specific law condemning violence against women. Nonetheless, in 2001, two national centres had been established to provide information and assistance to women who were victims of domestic violence, including help in initiating proceedings against their husbands.

32. **Ms. Patten** said that she wished to reiterate concerns about Algeria's reservations to the Convention. In 1999, the Government had expressed its willingness to review those reservations; however, the second report did not provide any information on subsequent developments or on the reasons for maintaining — or the obstacles to withdrawing — those reservations. The report (page 11) stated that no provisions of the Civil Code, the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure, the Electoral Code or the various special codes had been deemed by the Constitutional Council to be contrary to the spirit or the letter of the Convention. She would appreciate further information about the Council, particularly its mandate and composition.

33. With regard to the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women and its programme of action (page 14), the Committee wished to know whether a national action plan was in place and would appreciate more details on the budget allocated to those programmes and on specific measures taken in the areas mentioned. She commended the Government on its efforts with regard to law reform, but wished to reiterate the question concerning legal literacy programmes, in particular what the Government was doing to raise awareness of those laws among the population in general and women in particular and whether any special efforts were being made in rural areas. She also wished to know whether Algeria had a legal aid system and would appreciate more information on women's access to justice.

34. **Ms. Šimonović** said that she wished to know whether the report had been formally adopted by the Government before its presentation to the Committee and subsequently submitted to Parliament, whether the Committee's concluding comments would be submitted to the Government and Parliament, and what role non-governmental organizations had played in preparing the report. With regard to article 2 of the Convention, the report (page 11) stated that the Constitution included a guarantee of equality before the law; however, it was unclear whether that guarantee referred to equal rights for men and women. A clarification was needed as article 2 of the Convention called for the principle of the equality of men and women to be embodied in national constitutions, while article 15 referred to equality before the law of women and men.

35. With regard to discrimination, she wondered whether the Constitution's clause prohibiting discrimination based on sex was too narrow as it was not in line with the definition of discrimination contained in article 1 of the Convention and should refer to both direct and indirect discrimination. The reporting State should also clarify whether it planned to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention. Lastly, she welcomed the establishment of the National Advisory Committee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in 2001, but wished to know what role it played in monitoring international treaties to

which Algeria was a State party, in particular the Convention in question.

36. **Ms. Morvai**, referring to the report's statement that in the 1960s almost 90 per cent of Algerian women were illiterate, said that it was important to consider the report in context and congratulated Algeria on the huge progress that it had made since independence. Nonetheless, many problems persisted, such as women's low participation in the workforce and in public and political life. She welcomed the comments made by Algeria on the current situation concerning terrorism, but was worried about the long-term effects on women of the gender aspects of fundamentalist terrorism and wondered whether any research or monitoring had been carried out. Gender-based violence sought to modify women's lifestyles through guilt and fear. She wondered whether that was a fair assumption and, if so, whether any programmes existed to target the fear of fundamentalist violence, whether the international community was providing technical or financial assistance in that regard and with regard to gender issues and lastly, to what extent Algerian women had control over international aid.

37. **Ms. Arocha Dominguez**, referring to the national mechanism for the advancement of women in Algeria, said that it would be useful to have additional information on how the Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women combined its assessment activities with the implementation of the policies mentioned in the report and on its relationship with other mechanisms, such as the departments of other sectoral ministries relating to women's issues, and with civil society. In particular, she wished to know whether that relationship was regulated at all.

38. **Ms. Dairiam** said that, despite the huge progress made by Algeria, it was not evident that the holistic and comprehensive approach set out in the Convention was being followed or that efforts were based on the legal standards of the Convention. As a result, women remained at a disadvantage in many ways. The Committee wished to know what concrete steps the Government had taken to implement its recommendations following the initial report, in particular who was responsible for implementation; whether a body had been established to execute implementation; whether there was a time-bound action plan for implementation; whether non-governmental organizations had been consulted; and whether State authorities had been given any training on substantive equality and non-discrimination, as required by the Convention. In the light of the Convention's definition of discrimination and its insistence on de facto equality, it was not adequate simply to say that the law did not discriminate against women. Moreover, the absence of a legal definition of discrimination gave rise to discriminatory practices. She therefore wished to know whether the Government planned to establish a legal definition of equality and non-discrimination as provided for in the Convention.

39. **Ms. Gaspard**, responding to comments made by Algeria to the effect that in practice its reservations to the Convention were now outdated, asked why they had therefore not been withdrawn. Secondly, in addition to comments already made regarding the preparation of the report, she wished to know whether there had been an inter-ministry exchange on implementation of the Convention and whether each article of the Convention had been verified in terms of Algerian law. She had the impression that Algerian society had undergone a massive transformation, especially with regard to women, and that legislation was therefore lagging behind. Further information would also be appreciated on whether the Parliament had been consulted, whether a special parliamentary committee had been established to prepare the report and how the Government planned to follow up the Committee's recommendations. Lastly, she wondered how the reporting delegation planned to share the fruits of its dialogue with the Committee with Algerian society upon its return.

40. **Ms. Gnacadja** said that, as an African, she was well aware how hard it was to make progress in the area under discussion; however, the Committee had a clear mandate to ensure that commitments made were honoured and she therefore called for understanding from Algeria. In its initial report, Algeria had implied that the gradual process of withdrawing its reservations to the Convention had begun, as illustrated by the planned amendments to the Family Code, which the Committee had welcomed. However, the second periodic report (page 11) reiterated the statement that those reservations did not question the essence of the Convention. She wondered whether there had been a misunderstanding, as the Committee considered articles 2 and 16 to be core provisions of the Convention, hence its insistence on the need to withdraw reservations. Secondly, she would appreciate clarification on the subject of polygamy, which was not

mentioned in the report, particularly with regard to information from non-governmental organizations that it was now subject to preliminary judiciary authorization.

41. **Ms. Tavares da Silva** said that, while recognizing the Algerian Government's efforts, she strongly disagreed with the view that its reservations did not question the essence of the Convention. While articles 2 and 16 of the Convention were partly applied, that view went against the provisions of article 28 (2), according to which a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention was not permitted. She was also concerned by the statement that reservations would be withdrawn in the long run, which seemed to imply a hypothetical and unending process. She wondered whether the reason for the Government's cautious approach was that planned amendments to the Family Code were minor adjustments that were not yet fully in line with the Convention and, in that regard, requested further information and reassurances that they would indeed be in line with the Convention. With regard to the statement that little progress had been made on the issue of domestic violence, a recent national survey had found that almost three quarters of cases of violence against women occurred in the home. That issue therefore clearly needed to be addressed. Lastly, she enquired whether the National Women's Council, established in 1998, was fully operational.

42. **Ms. Pimentel** said that she wished to know whether the Government had initiated studies on violence against women, including violence in the family and sexual violence, with a view to drafting specific policies and legislation to protect women from such violence. She highlighted the importance of drafting specific legislation on the issue, rather than simply including violence against women in the Criminal Code, as the repressive approach was not the only one and aspects relating to prevention and protection went beyond the law. Secondly, she asked whether the Government was planning to set up training programmes for law enforcement officials to raise awareness of gender issues, discrimination and violence against women.

43. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) said that he understood that the process was an interactive one and had no qualms about coming before the Committee or taking its recommendations back to the highest authorities of the State. Since Algeria's initial report, his Government had sought to respond positively to the Committee's recommendations. While that response might not have been completely satisfactory, it was nonetheless an ongoing process. Responding to the questions concerning Algeria's reservations, he reassured the Committee that, when his Government had ratified the Convention, it had fully intended to adopt the Convention in its entirety. Its reservations were not indefinite and would disappear, once the problems giving rise to those reservations had been solved. The situation was constantly changing and he hoped it would be possible to withdraw them soon.

44. Responding to the questions concerning equality before the law and equal rights for men and women, he referred to article 29 of the Constitution, according to which citizens were equal before the law, and article 31, which referred to the equality of all citizens under the law. A joint reading of those two articles would give the Committee its answer. As to whether it was useful to define equality of the sexes in legislative texts, that remained an open but nonetheless timely question. Echoing comments made by Ms. Morvai, it was indeed important for the Committee to take account of the specific situation of each country. While his Government was not seeking a pretext, it was important to remember that for 10 years Algeria had endured the worst form of terrorism. During that time, no foreigners had been allowed into the country and, more importantly, women had paid the highest price and struggled the hardest owing to the fact that they had most to lose.

45. Algeria was also a developing country that had rescheduled its debt and was working on International Monetary Fund programmes, resulting in considerable cuts in social projects. Moreover, since independence, its population had increased almost three-fold and the proportion of female university students had increased from almost none to 53 per cent today. It was not always possible to provide reliable statistics as the situation was constantly changing; however, Algeria had sought to demonstrate the progress made regarding women from year to year and their role in relation to men, in all areas of society.

46. **Ms. Benabdallah** (Algeria) said that the National Institute for Public Health had conducted a survey on domestic violence against women with a view to gathering the relevant statistical information and introducing specific legislation on the matter. The aim of the survey — which had broken a significant taboo

within Algerian society — was to identify the circumstances under which such violence occurred and determine the nature of the services provided to deal with it.

47. With respect to the relationship between the Algerian Constitution and the Convention, she said that, in accordance with legislation introduced in 1999 by the Constitutional Council, international instruments ratified by Algeria prevailed over domestic laws, and Algerian women were therefore entitled to cite the provisions of the Convention before national courts. Algeria made no distinction between men and women regarding access to the justice system. The National Advisory Committee on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights provided a safeguard against human rights violations and submitted an annual report on the human rights situation in the country to the President. The amendments to the Family Code included new limitations on polygamy. However, society's attitudes towards polygamy had changed, and polygamy was now virtually non-existent in Algeria. Lastly, the training of magistrates included components on the provisions of international instruments ratified by Algeria, notably in matters concerning violence against women.

48. **Ms. Boureghda** (Algeria) said that, although a National Women's Council had been established in 1997, it had not yet become operational because of Algeria's difficult political situation. However, its establishment had demonstrated the significant level of interest in women's issues at the Government level. The Ministry for the Family and the Status of Women had no specific budget, as it acted in coordination with civil society, non-governmental organizations and other ministries, under a cooperation agreement, basing its strategies and programmes on the family as the core unit of society. The Ministry also participated in various national committees working on women's issues and proposed appropriate measures for women's advancement.

49. **Ms. Keddad** (Algeria) said that the national survey on domestic violence had been conducted jointly with several ministerial departments and with non-governmental organizations, which had played a key role in bringing the issue to the forefront. The survey had looked at all areas of society — including the health system, the justice system and the police — and had proven very useful. It had identified no significant differences according to sociocultural factors or education level, and represented a highly encouraging start to Algeria's efforts to devise a multisectoral national strategy.

50. **Ms. Alouani** (Algeria) said that the prevention of domestic violence and discrimination was an integral component of the training and refresher courses provided to members of Algeria's security forces.

51. **Ms. Yekken** (Algeria) said that Algerian law was in full compliance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in providing for equality for men and women before the law and in guaranteeing equality with respect to labour and social security provisions. However, the law also recognized that women were weaker than men and therefore merited special protection, such as measures to prevent them from having to perform dangerous work.

Articles 7 to 9

52. **Ms. Popescu** asked what measures had been taken to promote awareness of women's right to participate in the electoral process on an independent basis, particularly in rural areas, where gender stereotypes tended to persist, and whether any temporary special measures, such as the introduction of quotas, had been introduced to facilitate women's participation in political and public life. She would be grateful for more details about the women who were members of the Algerian Government and who worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and wondered why the reporting delegation was not headed by a woman minister.

53. **Ms. Coker-Appiah** said that the Code of Algerian Nationality discriminated against women because it did not give them the automatic right to pass on their nationality to their children, whereas it did accord that right to men. She wished to know Algeria's plans to resolve that inequality.

54. **Ms. Gaspard** said that Algeria's second periodic report (CEDAW/C/DZA/2) had referred to progress in women's access to decision-making positions, but she would be grateful if future periodic reports could include a more detailed statistical breakdown of that progress. It had previously been thought that the lack of women in elected positions demonstrated that they did not aspire to such positions. However, recent research had shown that it was often the political parties themselves that tended to exclude women. Over recent years, many countries had adopted amendments

to their Constitutions and laws in order to remedy the situation, and she wondered whether Algeria had introduced any temporary special measures to encourage women's participation in decision-making at the national and local levels.

55. **Ms. Saiga** noted that in its replies to the Committee's list of issues and questions (CDAW/PSWG/2005/1/CRP.2), Algeria referred to a proposed bill amending and complementing the Code of Algerian Nationality, and wondered why more progress had not been made in that regard.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.